



Meeting 119

September 5th, 2017

Notes

Those present were: Jenny Armstrong, Brian Austin, Janice Austin, Christa-Maria Cross, Anne Elson, Anna Godwin, Lynda Gould, Fr Christopher Greaney, Jonathan Holden, Anne Kirby, Michael Kirby and Alan Pratten.

Apologies: Ann Alison, Fr John Cross, Richard Gordon.

The meeting opened at 2 p.m. with the 'Prayer for Our Earth' from *Laudato Si'*.

1. Matters arising from the July 24th meeting

- Alan stressed the importance of maintaining and strengthening **links with Trinity School**. Lynda had sent an email to Joanna Hewitt (taking over Trudie Pabor's responsibilities, including, we believe, the Trinity Pax Christi group), but Joanna had replied that she could not respond until she was fully in post in September. Brian noted that, before her retirement in July, Trudie Pabor had committed the Pax Christi group to providing a closing liturgy at the Diocesan Justice & Peace Assembly in Solihull on October 14th, and that Joanna would have to start organising that soon. Fr Christopher observed that Fr Patrick Mileham is now the Chaplain to Trinity and might be able to facilitate such links.

Brian to contact Joanna Hewitt as soon as term starts to remind her of Trudie Pabor's promise to supply a liturgy in October.

- On the topic of **links with young people**, Jenny mentioned that she had just met Erin Doughty, the newly appointed parish youth worker, and had given her a copy of the St Peter's Justice & Peace Review of the Year 2016/17.

2. Review of the Year 2016/17

- Fr Christopher asked for clarification whether this was **an umbrella group for the three parishes**. Jenny replied that (a) it dealt primarily with informing and stimulating activities in St Peter's parish, since there were established groups in both Our Lady's (Kindaid) and St Joseph's (St Joseph's Justice & Peace group), and (b) although largely the same people came to the monthly meetings, they were open to any parishioners (from the three parishes), and so we did not use the term 'group' with its implication of being closed to occasional visitors.
- Jenny distributed a summary of the main activities. She asked what had gone well and what poorly.
- Brian felt that the **Lenten Stations of the Cross** had gone well this year: the new pictures and associated words for three of the Stations had improved the relevance of the examples to the underlying themes. Janice noted that more changes would be required next year as some of the illustrative examples were becoming out-of-date. In response to a question, Brian said that they had looked at the new CAFOD Lenten Stations but found them too specific – all relating to water problems in Kenya.
- There was general feeling that the creation of a **new CAFOD team** for the parish, whose members (Ann Alison, Brian Austin, Sioned Hammond-Jones and Andrew Murphy) had different roles, in place of a single CAFOD Representative, had been a success. Janice attributed the success to the poster spelling out the different roles, which had attracted Ann Alison at least. But Anne Kirby said that a similar advertising initiative in St Joseph's had not persuaded people to sign the CAFOD 'Power to be' campaign cards, whereas speaking to individual people as they left church was much more effective. It was agreed that personal contact was a better way to recruit more volunteers and particularly younger people for Justice & Peace activities, but it was hard for older regular supporters to know whom to approach.

- Jenny mentioned that the **Hunger Lunch**, run as a LiveSimply event in Lent, had featured CAFOD and helped to recruit one of the CAFOD volunteers.
- Brian admitted that his efforts to persuade people to **switch to green energy suppliers** had been disappointing – just three people had switched. Anne Elson – one of his first converts to green energy – said she had tried to tell people the benefits, but without success so far.
- Janice or Brian was disappointed that our clergy were not more pro-active in consulting Justice and Peace supporters on events or celebrations with J and P relevance. For example, despite messages and suggested prayers being sent regarding Pope Francis' World Day of Prayer for Creation on 1st September there seemed to be no mention of it at any of the Churches on the following Sunday. Janice thought one person should be given the job of alerting the clergy in all three parishes of events coming up, announcements to be made at mass and suggested bidding prayers and any extra liturgies appropriate for those events. Jonathan suggested compiling a simple calendar of J&P events, and also (at risk of overkill) delivering a written copy to each church for each priest there of coming events, announcements, bidding prayers or liturgies suggested by the Justice & Peace meetings. Fr Christopher endorsed the view that it was for the J&P group to keep the priests informed: they find it difficult to keep track of all the special days they are asked to observe.

Before the next meeting everyone to start listing the events that should appear on a simple J&P calendar and their dates in 2018.

- Anne Elson believed we should all as individuals be prepared to **write to our MPs, local Councillors or other authorities** to express our views about a wide range of justice and/or peace issues even if we do not fully understand the details of them: for example, at her CLC meeting that morning they had agreed that they should protest against pollution of the ocean by plastic microbeads, though none present fully understood the technology involved. In the discussion that followed, it was agreed that supporting a mass campaign or petition without acquiring expertise in the subject could be valuable in exerting pressure on politicians or organizations, but that a carefully written letter showing detailed knowledge of an issue could be more effective in changing the view of a politician or decision-maker and often elicited a fuller reply.
- Alan thought the setting up of a partnership between St Peter's and the Salvation Army 'Way Ahead' Project as the basis of **the Saturday Friendship Group** (which had actually occurred before the review period) had been a success in reducing tensions that had been there previously, and he asked how this partnership could be developed. Janice replied that the new Way Ahead Project Leader, Yvonne McKinnon, had her own ideas on development and was starting to implement them, but she hoped that she would soon be ready to involve the SFG in developing strategies for the future. Brian pointed out that the new form of Saturday morning sessions at the drop-in centre (with more attention given to fewer clients who had booked their places) were now recognized as a success, compared with the larger numbers and more chaotic conditions for example on a Friday. Janice also recognized quite a number of successes in the review period of individual clients who had overcome their personal problems and started rebuilding their lives.
- Anna Godwin had observed a huge range of new people coming to the **Leamington Night Shelter** and significant tensions around them, while a number of the old clients had dropped out: she saw parallels with the problems Janice had referred to on weekdays at the drop-in centre.

3. Any Other Business

- Lynda offered to draft outside the meeting and send to Jenny and Jonathan a **Rosary intention for September**. *[She subsequently offered: 'We join Pope Francis in praying for the Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar: we pray that they will be free from persecution and receive the help they need'.]*

Lynda to put the intention on the J&P noticeboard and in the Prayer Intentions Book; Jonathan to include in the newsletter.

4. Future Meetings

- **The meeting on 25 September is cancelled.** The next meeting (in the Flint Room) will be at 7.30 p.m. on **Monday 23 October**, when the reflection will be on the gospel for the 30th Sunday of Year A, Matthew 22: 34-40. The last meeting of the year will be on Monday 27 November 2017.

Fr Christopher closed the meeting with prayer at 3 p.m..